



ADVENTURES IN READING WITH

Nature
CAT

TEACHER'S GUIDE

GRADE 3



EPISODE
Muck Amok

THE BIG IDEA:
Marsh Ecosystems and the
Effects of Pollution



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The Big Idea:

Marsh Ecosystems and the Effects of Pollution

Content Objectives:

Students will strengthen literary skills by reading informational texts connected to Nature Cat episodes. Students learn through text about what marshes are, why they're important, and the environmental problems facing them. Students will strengthen their writing and observation skills through an in-class journaling activity.

Time:

Part I: 25 minutes

Part II: 30 minutes

Part III: 1 hour

Part IV: SEE DIY

Materials:

You can find these media materials and more in the Nature Cat Collection at pbslearningmedia.org.

- Nature Cat 11-minute story segment: Muck Amok
- Class Set Nature Cat Readers for Grade 3

You will also need:

- Notebooks or "Nature Journals"
- Pencils and crayons or colored pencils
- Recycled garbage

Procedures:

Part I: Give students access to the materials

- Watch the video with your students.
- Instruct students to read their Nature Cat readers on their own. Give them time to absorb and interact with the text. Have them finish the crossword puzzle on the final page.

Part II: Exploring Marsh Ecosystems

- Have students take out their notebooks and write a list of things they learned about marshes from the Nature Cat episode. What kinds of animals did they notice? What kinds of plants lived in the water? After they write, lead a discussion about their observations.
- Review the main ideas in the text. Have students read passages in the text aloud. At the end of each section, review the glossary word or words that are presented there. Ask the students to read the definition of the word, provided on the final page.

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- Discuss how the reading material and the video work together, and what additional information they learned from the reading material.

Part III: Daisy Activity: Tally Ho! Get Up and Go!

- Read the Daisy sidebar entitled "Conserving Marshes."
- Activity: Pollution. Bring in a recycle bin full of things people throw away and are harmful to the environment: plastic bags, plastic soda rings, bottles (glass and plastic), etc. Place three or four of these pieces of garbage on a desk or table at the front of the classroom.
- Have students observe these potential pollutants. Ask them to write and draw a picture in their notebooks about how they think each pollutant could harm the environment. For example, a glass bottle could break and its sharp pieces could hurt animals. Plastic soda rings could get stuck around an animal's neck.
- Discuss other pollutants that are harder to see, such as pesticides.
- Have students brainstorm ways that people can save marshes. Examples may include picking up litter, making laws against draining marshes, and not dumping garbage and waste in wetlands.

Part IV: What's Beneath the Surface

- Ask students what kinds of living things they think live *under* the marsh water's surface. Have students discuss what they know about muck and why it's important, with information from both the reader and episode.
- If time and resources permit, complete the Pond Viewer DIY downloadable at http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/naturecat_diy_pond_viewer/nature-cat-diy-pond-viewer/ or send the activity home for students to share with their parents or guardians.